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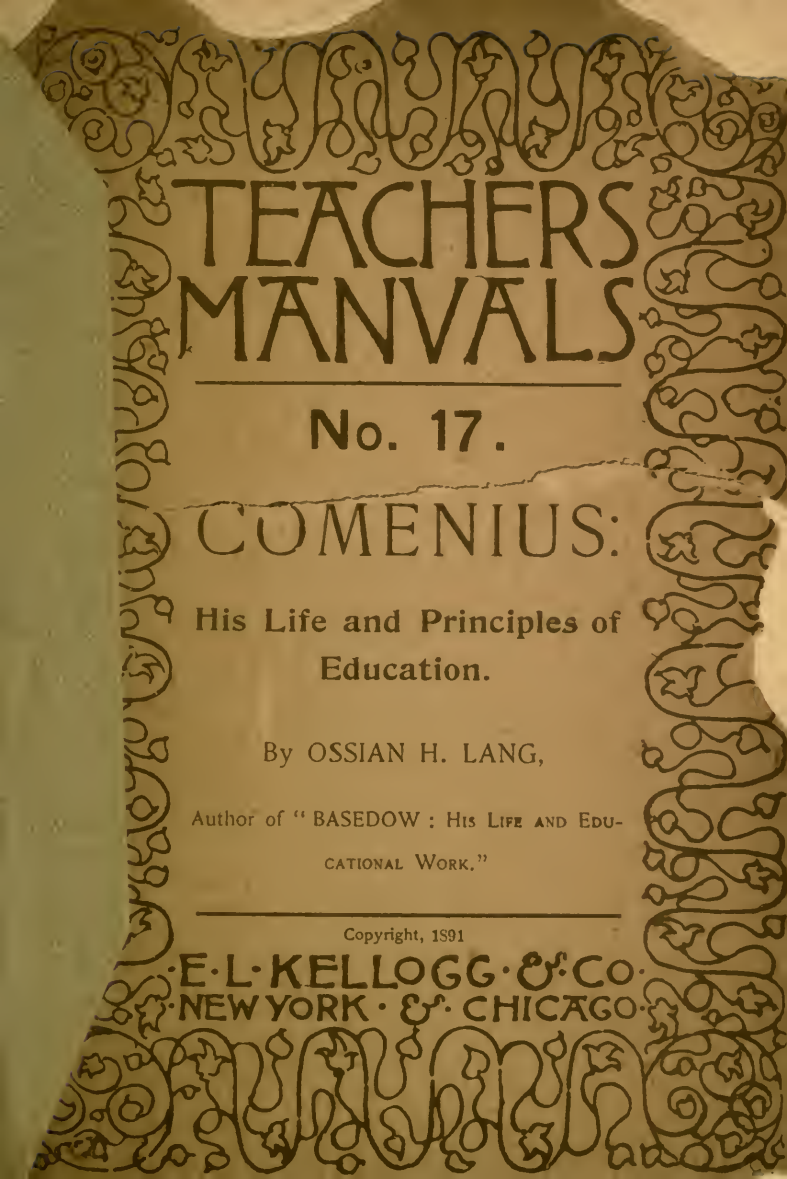
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COMENIUS:

His Life and Principles of
Education.

By OSSIAN H. LANG,

Author of "BASEDOW : HIS LIFE AND EDUCATIONAL WORK."

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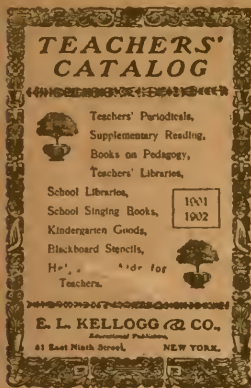
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COMENIUS:

HIS LIFE AND PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION.

BY

OSSIAN H. LANG,

AUTHOR OF "BASEDOW: HIS LIFE AND EDUCATIONAL WORK."

NEW YORK AND CHICAGO:

E. L. KELLOGG & CO.

1891.

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INTRODUCTION.

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THE greatest and most important of all the reformers whose life and work have been recorded in the annals of pedagogy is certainly Amos Comenius, "the prophet," among educationists, as he has been called.

A pure, profound, and loving heart; a restless will; a highly-gifted, wide-seeing, self-thinking, and powerful mind; and an experience that had been wrought from the vicissitudes of life, united with a disinterested, untiring zeal in all his works, a longing and striving for a better future of mankind,—make him one of the noblest characters in the educational field. What he has done for the science and art of teaching will never be forgotten as long as education progresses in the way that he opened up, leading as it does to the goal of ennobled humanity. His theory of teaching, as a whole, surpasses any that had been proposed up to his time. To Comenius, first of all, we owe it that pedagogy was regarded as a science and teaching as an art.

It is true Comenius's ideas did not go into effect immediately. But we must consider that he lived in a most stormy age. The horrors of wars and insurrections kept the nations of Europe in a state of turmoil,

and forced all educational interests into the background. The dangers which followed the return of peace were greater even than those of war. The people had become demoralized; ignorance and its allies, vice and superstition, reigned supreme. The education of children suffered the most, as might be expected. Yet even in this time of darkness this philanthropic thinker was at work to prepare a way for a better future and a more enlightened generation. "The principles, the wishes, the hopes of Comenius had become, so to say, the spirit of all that is good and noble" (Herder).

It was this spirit that inspired *Basedow*, the champion of the rights of childhood, in the eighteenth century, to head the revolution for spiritual liberty, and to ring in the era of enlightenment, and with it a better education of youth. He proclaimed that Comenius had pointed out the right way, but it had not been followed. His continued agitations roused the people, and called the thinkers of his age to the work of school reform. When he retired from the field of activity *Pestalozzi* came to the front. Through Pestalozzi's influence the principles of Comenius were forever established.

One of the most distinguished disciples of Pestalozzi was *Froebel*, the founder of the Kindergarten. His greatest merit, it is felt, is that he penetrated the thoughts of Comenius, and worked them out critically and philosophically. He saw the great importance of infant education, and devoted his life to it. His Kindergarten was the "mothers' school" of Comenius in an improved and ennobled form. His was the grand idea that *all* should be educated. His "centres of educa-

tion" were the same as those of Comenius: Nature, Man, God.

The peculiar congeniality of Froebel and Comenius will make a comparison of their pedagogic doctrines an interesting and profitable study. Here we can only briefly refer to it to show the growth of Comenius's pedagogy, and leave the critical investigation to those who may be interested.

That the principles of Pestalozzi and Froebel have taken root in this country, we owe particularly to the untiring efforts of *Horace Mann* and *Miss Elizabeth Peabody*. The dissemination of their ideas has deeply affected the teaching in our public schools, and has elevated the work of the teacher and ennobled his profession. A better, a new education has been developed. The pedagogic ideas, principles, and plans of *Comenius* have really been the building-material for this noble structure, which is destined to become a bulwark of individual, social, and political safety.



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JOHN AMOS COMENIUS.

His Education.—John Amos Comenius was born on March 28, 1592, near Hungarian-Brod,* a small Moravian city on the river Olsawa. His parents belonged to the Moravian Brethren, a society of Protestants. His father (Komensky) was a miller, who died in 1602. The boy's guardians neglected his education. When sixteen years old he began to attend a Latin school. These circumstances, while disadvantageous, undoubtedly gave the impulse to his reformatory endeavors. He writes himself: "I ceased not from that time to labor for the repairing of my lost years, and not only for myself, but for the good of others also. I could not but pity others in this respect, especially in my own nation, which is too slothful and careless in matters of learning. I was continually thinking of finding out some means whereby more might be inflamed with the love of learning, and brought to some notable proficiency in the studies by a more easy method."

* This was his birth-place according to Zoubek, whose biography of Comenius is evidently one of the best and latest authorities in this matter. Schmidt and Raumer give Comnia; Palacky and Quick give Nivnitz, near Brunn.

He visited several schools of Germany, after the manner of the Moravian Brethren. At Herborn, Nassau, he was greatly influenced by one of his teachers, who was the professor of philosophy and divinity. From Herborn he went to the University of Heidelberg to study theology and philosophy. After completing his studies he travelled in Holland, France, and England, and in 1614 returned to his native country, and was appointed rector in the Brethren's school at Prerau.

First Steps towards School Reform.—Although only twenty-two years of age, he had come to the conclusion that the schools were in great need of reform. The manner of instruction at that time was dull, impractical, and even mind-killing. It turned the pupils away from nature to the study of mere, meaningless words. A number of great educators were already at work to find better and easier ways for the study of languages. The most distinguished of these men was *Ratichius* (Ratke). Comenius had become acquainted with Ratke's plan of an "Improvement of Instruction," and tried to put it into operation in the school at Prerau.

Feels the Want of good School-books.—After being granted ordination, he was called to Fulnek in 1618, to conduct the church and school of the Moravian Brethren. Here he collected many new experiences in educational matters, and discovered the real needs of the school. He began to write school-books. The want of good and methodically-arranged *books* of this kind appeared to him to be one of the principal causes of the fruitlessness of school instruction.

Is Banished.—At Fulnek the Brethren had had their

headquarters since 1480. It was also the city of refuge for the persecuted Waldenses. In 1621 this city was taken and plundered by the Spaniards. Comenius lost all his property, his library, and his manuscripts. Shortly after that all Protestant clergymen of Bohemia and Moravia were banished. Comenius found a hiding-place on the estate of a Moravian nobleman, the Governor-general Von Zierotin.

“The Fountain of all Good.”—In his solitude Comenius turned to the study of the laws of Nature, and wrote spiritual and educational books. The fruit of his reflections on the “Fountain of all Good” (*summum bonum*) was “The Labyrinth of the World and the Paradise of the Human Heart,” a writing of which Zoubek, a biographer of Comenius, says: “It is one of the most beautiful writings in the Bohemian literature, a religious-philosophical, satiric allegory of genuine dramatic picturesqueness.” Comenius declared that man, no matter what his condition in life, could assuredly find happiness in religion. Happiness of mankind was the one great end that he was striving for to the end of his life. For this object the whole system of education of Comenius was built up.

Writes a short Methodology.—After having undertaken a perilous journey to Poland, as the delegate of the persecuted Brethren, to find an asylum where their religion would be tolerated, Comenius spent a short time in the family of Baron Sadowsky of Sloupna, in the Bohemian mountains. He took an active interest in the education of the Baron’s children, and wrote a short

methodology, or course of study, for their teacher to follow.

Goes into Exile.—An Imperial decree now banished all Protestants of every description from Bohemia and all Austrian provinces. In the winter of 1628 Comenius left his native country, never to return, and with thirty thousand of other unfortunate Protestants went into exile.

Digs for Educational Principles.—The exiles settled in Leszna (Poland), and Comenius became first a teacher and later the rector of the Brethren's grammar-school. Here his ideas of what was demanded in the instruction of youth were moulded into clear and definite shape. Searching for principles, he had perused the works of Francis Bacon, Andreae, Campanella, Ratke, and other distinguished writers. He was confident "that so many sparks would conspire into one flame." He writes: "Discovering here and there some gaps and defects, as it were, I could not abstain from attempting something that might rest on an immovable foundation, and which, if once found out, would not be subject to any ruin."

The "Gate of Languages Unlocked."—In 1631 Comenius published the "*Janua Linguarum reserata*," or, "The Gate of Languages Unlocked." It was a kind of elementary encyclopedia of all sciences, arts, and trades. Its object was to show to the pupil, "in a short compass, the whole world and the Latin language." This work was, shortly after its appearance, translated into twelve European and four Oriental languages. Pierre Bayle writes of it in his "*Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*:"

“If Comenius had written nothing but this work, he would have been immortalized.”

The “**Didactica Magna.**”—The “**Didactica Magna,**” Comenius’s celebrated manual of education, is undoubtedly the greatest of his works. Written originally in Bohemian, it appeared in a Latin translation about 1638. It contains a complete scientific system of education, the first that was ever attempted. The work is replete with pedagogic wisdom and suggestiveness, and has been, and is to-day, an inexhaustible mine of thought for the student of the science of teaching.

The Foundation Principle. — In the “**Didactica,**” Comenius proceeds from the principle “Art can do nothing but imitate Nature,” or, in other words, “Of Nature we learn how to teach and learn.” From this principle he deduced the golden rule of instruction: “Teach objectively.”

The idea of a sense-impressing instruction had already been discovered by Francis Bacon. Comenius admits this, and says that the meaning and the immeasurable extent of this principle had come to him first through Bacon’s writings. Bacon, however, had given only the key of Nature, but had not unlocked the door to her secrets. He had only shown in a few examples how they were to be unlocked, leaving the rest to future observations. How Comenius discovered the principle, he explains further in the words: “After many workings and tossings of my mind, by reducing everything to the laws of Nature, I lighted upon my ‘**Didactica Magna,**’ which shows the art of readily and solidly teaching all men all things.”

The Universal Method.—Comenius holds that “there is but one natural method for all sciences, arts, and languages.” By this method—the Universal Method, as he calls it—three inseparable objects are to be attained: (1) Intelligence, (2) Virtue or good morals, and (3) Piety. These ends can be gained only if the instruction is general, when “*all men are taught all.*” He goes on to explain: “This should not be understood as if we demanded of all the knowledge of all sciences and arts (particularly a complete and penetrating knowledge). This is neither useful, according to its nature; nor is it possible to every one, as life is too short. But that, if *every one* receive an instruction that will make him acquainted with the foundations, laws, and numbers of everything of importance, all will be sent out into the world to be not only observers, but also doers. Provision must be made and adhered to, that no one who lives in the world will meet with anything too utterly unknown to him which he could not, at least in some measure, judge and make it serve a certain purpose, without falling into dangerous errors. Therefore, we must endeavor, in general and without exception, in the schools and through the influence of the schools in the whole life, that (1) the natural talents be developed through the sciences and arts, (2) the manner of expression refined, (3) the morals formed into decency, and (4) that God be worshipped with all one’s heart.” In a later work, “The Newest Method,” as he called it, Comenius mentions as the three principal parts of his method: (1) the parallelism of things and words, (2) the uninterrupted step by step progress of instruction, and (3) the easy

and pleasant manner in instruction, which advances the pupil quickly and holds him continually employed.

These most important methodical principles are explained in the "Didactica" in very clear and simple language:"

Methodical Principles.—"*Words shall be taught and learned only in connection with the things*, just as wine is bought and sold with the cask, and a sword with the sheath. For what else is the word but a case or sheath for the thing? Whatever language is learned, and if it be the mother-tongue, the things which are to be named in words, must be explained; and, in turn, the pupils must be taught to express in words what they see, hear, touch, and taste, so that the language always progresses and perfects itself parallel with the understanding. Likewise, reading and writing, teaching and learning, must be done simultaneously, because what Nature has joined together dare not be separated."

Everything must be presented to the senses as much as possible; to wit, the visible to the eye, the audible to the ear, odors to the sense of smell, the tastable to the taste, and the touchable to the sense of touch; and, whenever something can be grasped by more than one sense at one time, let it be presented to them at one time. One may, however, if the things themselves cannot be presented, use representations of them, such as models and pictures. If any one should doubt whether also the spiritual and absent could be presented to the senses, so may he not forget that God has created all things in just correspondence, so that for the supernatural representatives can be found in the natural,

for the absent in the present, for the invisible in the visible."

"It is a mistake to let rules in an abstract form go before, and afterwards explain them in examples. For the light must go before him for whom it is intended to shine."

"Whatever is to be done, must be learned by doing it. Mechanics do not detain their apprentices for a long time with meditations: they put them to work at once, that they may learn to forge by forging, to carve by carving, to paint by painting, etc. So the pupils should also learn at school to write by writing, to speak by speaking, to count by counting, etc. Then the schools are workshops filled with the sound of work."

"Not only sciences, but also good morals and piety, must be taught at school. Scientific culture ennobles the understanding, language, and hand to view, discuss, and to do everything that is useful in a rational manner. If something of this is omitted there will be a gap, which not only implies a want of culture, but weakens also the solidity. Nothing can be solid but that which is connected in all parts."

"The education shall go on without whippings, severity, and compulsion, as easy, pleasant, and voluntary as possible. Instruction shall not be full of cares, and yet advance the pupil fast."

Division of Labor and Time in Education.—"That man might elevate himself and be formed to true human dignity, God has given him the years of youth, in which he is incapable of other things, and solely fitted for development. The care for this devolves naturally upon

the parents. However, as men and human employments vary so much that those are scarce who know and are able and find time by their other occupations to devote themselves to the instruction of their children, sound advice has long suggested that the education of the children of many at one time is intrusted to specially-selected persons, who are noted for their knowledge of things and strictness of morals."

"Just as the artisans and mechanic artists fix a certain time for their apprentices, in which the entire circumference of the particular branch must be completed, so also for the arts, sciences, and languages certain periods shall be fixed that, after the expiration of a certain number of years, the entire circuit of culture has been finished, and that from these cultivating workshops of humanity go forth truly cultivated, truly virtuous, and truly pious men. To attain this aim I demand for the exercise of the mind the entire time of youth from childhood up to the beginning of manhood, that is, up to the twenty-fourth year. Those years I will divide into four distinct grades, or time-divisions: early childhood, boyhood, the beginning of youth, and the ripe youth. I will allow for each grade six years, and give to each a separate school: For the first grade, the maternal school; for the second grade, the public school, or school of the mother-tongue; for the third, the Latin or grammar school; for the fourth, the university and the travelling-time.

"A maternal school should be found in every house; a public (national) school in every community, every village, and every city; a grammar-school (gymnasium) in

every large town; and a university in every country or large province."

The same things shall be taught in all of these schools; but in the lower schools only generally and in outline, in the higher schools more in detail and more completely.

The Maternal School.—In the maternal school the mother is the teacher. "During the first six years the foundation shall be laid of everything,—of the moral life of the children and of all that they are to learn in life. The mother is to teach the first beginnings of the sciences and arts: for instance, of astronomy, in the observation of the sun, stars, and their motions; of the physical sciences, in the observation of animals, plants, etc.; of optics, in the observation of the differences in light, darkness, and colors. Geography shall begin with the knowledge of the room, the yard, the streets, fields, etc. History shall begin with the references to what happened yesterday and the day before; chronology, with the differences of day and night, hour, week, holiday; politics, with the knowledge of family government. Arithmetic shall begin with numbers; geometry, with the ideas long and broad, line, plane, inch, yard, etc. Music shall begin in listening to songs and singing along with the mother. Grammar shall begin with the articulation of simple words; rhetoric, with expressions through gestures, and with observing and understanding the gestures of others." The general object of the maternal school is to cultivate the external senses.

The Public School.—The public (national) school is to be the "school of the mother-tongue." Its general object

is "the cultivation of the internal senses, the imagination and the memory, and the executive organs, the hand and tongue." Comenius believes the public school to be the true workshop of humanity. The ideas he advances are striking and powerful, and are some of the most valuable treasures that we have in our pedagogic literature on this subject. Many of them are now generally accepted; others have never been and, under the present social conditions, can never be fully realized. But he was on the right road to a goal that is worth striving for, even if it be ever unattainable.

He writes: "*All* the children of both sexes should first of all be sent to the public or national school. Here I have the opinions of some against me. But my educational system compels me to be of a different opinion. For,

(1) I have in view a general education of all who are born as men, to all that is human.

(2) I want that all shall be educated to all virtues; also to modesty, concord, and to mutual eagerness to serve each other.

(3) Trying to decide for a six-year-old child what a life-vocation he is fitted for, seems to be over-hastiness.

(4) Another reason to me is this, that the boundlessly beloved nymph (the Latin) is not all that my 'Universal Method' demands, but it seeks after a way for the harmonious development in the mother-tongue.

(5) To try to teach a foreign language before the child has learned the vernacular is the same as if a boy was to learn to ride before he can walk. Finally,

(6) I demand a 'real' education. 'The special object

of this school is to be that all the children, from the sixth to the twelfth or thirteenth year are instructed in that which will be continually employed in practical life for a particular use.' The children shall be taught reading, writing, arithmetic, measuring, singing, the Bible, morality, political and domestic economy, history, physical and particularly home geography, and, lastly, the principal trades. The latter branch is to be taught for two reasons, to wit: (*a*) that the children know something of those trades, and (*b*) that their natural inclination to a particular profession may have opportunity to show itself."

To attain this object the following "means" are to be employed:

1. The course covers six years, and is divided for six classes.

2. Every class has special books, which exhaust all that is necessary for the particular class. The books of the lower classes contain the more general, more familiar, and easier; the books of the higher classes, the particulars. The same subjects will be treated in all the books with these provisions.

3. (*a*) The school hours are to be four only. The remaining time may be set aside for housework or recreation.

- (*b*) The morning hours are to be devoted to the cultivation of the understanding and the memory, and the two afternoon hours to the practice of the hand and voice.

- (*c*) The morning hours are the best time for teaching something new.

(d) This may be repeated in the afternoon, when nothing new shall be taught.

Plans of Other Works.—Comenius had given, in his “*Didactica*,” a complete system of education. He now intended to prepare, besides methodical books for the instruction in languages, special foundation books for instruction. Standing on the principle, “These three—intelligence, virtue, and piety—are the three sources from which flow forth all brooks of all most perfect joy,” he thought of writing three books: (1) a “*Pansophia*,” (2) a “*Panhistoria*,” and (3) a book of “*General Dogmatics*.”

Called to Sweden.—The “*Didactica Magna*” and the “*Janua Reserata*” had established Comenius’s fame in all the learned world. Besides the Bible, there was perhaps no other book in so many hands as the latter work. The author received a brilliant offer from Sweden to reform the schools of that country, and to put his system of education into operation. He declined, because, as he wrote, he was afraid to take upon himself “so heavy and dangerous a burden.”

“The Pansophia.”—In 1635 Comenius announced that he had begun to write a “*Pansophia*,” or “*Universal Wisdom*,” in which the sum of all human wisdom and art was to be traced to the three principles, God, World, and Reason, and which would contain an exposition of how all human affairs and all conditions of humanity could be regulated and led to the highest harmony, on the basis of the acquired cognition. This “*Pansophia*” was, for more than twenty-five years, the main work of his life. The more he wrote at it, the

greater and more insurmountable the difficulty of carrying out the idea seemed to grow. He complained himself, after nine years of hard labor: "If it were only in my power to be able to do more and to want less. The higher I climb, the wider grows the view. I cannot but strive for the higher, the perfect, and the better."

Published in England.—All the thoughts that Comenius had written down on his idea of a "Pansophia," up to 1637, he sent to Samuel Hartlib, his most enthusiastic admirer, in England. Without awaiting the consent of the author, Hartlib published the manuscripts immediately, under the title "Pansophiæ Prodromus," or, "Forerunner of the Universal Wisdom," and in 1642 issued an English translation of it, which he called "A Reformation of Schools." Everywhere the grand idea and its author became the object of admiration. A learned German wrote, soon after the publication of the manuscripts: "It animates already the whole of Europe to the study of the pansophy and of better didactics. One must confess, if Comenius had done no more than to implant in all minds such a seed of incitement, he would still have done enough."

Summoned to England.—In England enthusiastic voices were loud in praise of the idea of a Universal Wisdom. Parliament decided to summon Comenius. He was to call together a council of learned men, without regard to their nationality, which would work out the "Pansophia," under his direction. Comenius arrived in England in 1641, but went away again the next year, without having made a beginning even, as the Irish

insurrection and the differences between the Parliament and King Charles I. disturbed all his plans.

Goes to Sweden.—While in England he received an invitation to come to Sweden, from a rich Dutch nobleman, Lewis de Geer, “the great Alms-Dispenser of Europe,” as Comenius calls him. He accepted. Soon after his arrival in Sweden he was called to Stockholm by the great Chancellor Oxenstiern, the “Eagle of the North.” Oxenstiern took very much interest in school matters. He had long before come to the conclusion that the schools needed a thorough reform, and had already conferred with Ratke on this subject. He could not approve of Ratke’s scheme, however, and now believed firmly that Comenius was the man to carry out a complete reform. Oxenstiern and Skyte, the chancellor of Upsal University, who had been the tutor of King Gustavus Adolphus, questioned Comenius closely on the foundation of his schemes. They were both well satisfied. They commended the continuation of the work on the “Pansophia,” but both also agreed that Comenius should first meet the greatest need of the schools, by writing school-books after his method. He was granted a pension, and, at the advice of his patrons, he settled in Elbing (West Prussia), which at that time belonged to Sweden, to write the required books.

Many Cares.—He worked hard to live up to the promises made to his Swedish friends, but had to fight against many difficulties. His English admirers could not allow any delay in the appearance of his “Pansophia,” and urged him to continue at that work. Oxenstiern, on the other side, kept him strictly to his prom-

ises, and urged him to complete the school-books. Besides, he had turned to theology again, and was kept busy with religious controversies. Last, but not least, he was continually short of money, and had to give private lessons to supply his wants.

• **His School-books Published.**—In 1648 Comenius was elected as bishop of the exiled Brethren, and returned to Leszna. Here he completed the manuscripts of the promised school books, the “*Methodus Linguarum Novissima*,” or, “*The Newest Method*,” and five other linguistic works. These were the fruits of his hard labors at Elbing. He submitted them to a Swedish commission for approval, and, after revising them once more, had them published.

Goes to Hungary.—In 1650 he received an invitation to come to Transylvania, from Prince Rakoczy, who was a great admirer of Comenius. The whole school system of Hungary was to be remodelled, and a model school to be established in Saros-Patak, according to his ideas. Comenius went there and worked four years for the realization of this plan. He organized the institution, and called it “*The Pansophic School*.” But it was not destined to be successful. In 1655 the school closed.

The “*Orbis Pictus*” Appears.—While at Saros-Patak, Comenius completed his “*Orbis Pictus*,” or, “*The World in Pictures*,” and published it in 1657, at Nuremberg. It is the first picture-book for the instruction of youth. It has seen a great many new editions, and has been translated, revised, and elaborated. The “*Orbis Pictus*” was introduced into the schools every-

where, and till Basedow's "Elementary" appeared it was one of the most used school-books. The great Goethe tells us: "Besides the 'Orbis Pictus' of Amos Comenius, we used no other book of this kind." Basedow writes: "If Comenius could have united his zeal in the interest of youth with the expanse of thought of our times, I should not have written the 'Elementary,' but at most given instruction for using his writings."

The Principle of Sense-impression.—The foundation principle of the "Orbis Pictus" is announced in the preface in the following words: "Nihil est in intellectu, quod prius non fuerit in sensu," or, "Nothing is in the understanding that was not first in the senses."

On this principle of sense-impression all our modern instruction is founded. Comenius was the first who introduced this golden rule into the science of teaching. He therefore, and no other, is the founder of the "New Education."

Explanation of the Principle.—Comenius defined his idea of a sense-impressing instruction very clearly and forcibly in the preface to the "Orbis Pictus." He wrote: "The remedy for ignorance is found in art and science, which shall be brought to the minds in the schools, but so that it be a true, perfect, clear, and thorough knowledge. True will it be if nothing is taught but what is useful in life, so that we have no reason afterward for saying: We do not know what is necessary to know, because we have not learned the necessary. Perfect will it be if the mind is prepared to wisdom, the tongue to eloquence, and the hands to an assiduous carrying on of the affairs of life. This will then be the

salt of life, to wit, *Knowing, Acting, and Speaking*. Clear, and therefore also thorough and firm, will it be if all that is taught and learned is not dark or confused, but intelligible, well discerned, and well divided; if all sensible objects are rightly presented to the senses so that the intellect can comprehend them."

"This latter is the foundation on which all other parts are built, since we can neither act nor speak wisely unless we first learn to comprehend what we are to do and say. Now it is certain that there is nothing in the understanding that was not first in the senses. Consequently, it is to lay the foundation of all wisdom, all eloquence, and of all good and prudent conduct, carefully to train the senses to note with accuracy the difference between natural objects. Since this point is ordinarily neglected in the schools of to-day, and as objects are proposed to pupils that they do not understand, because they have not been rightly presented and represented to their senses, it is for this reason, on the one hand, and the toil of teaching on the other, that the work of learning has become so burdensome and so unfruitful."

"Instruction must begin with a real observation of things, and not with a verbal description of them."

His Manuscripts Burned. — Comenius returned to Leszna in 1654, and stayed there till the Poles won the city back again from the Swedes. Leszna was reduced to a heap of ashes. Comenius lost again all his property. His library and all his manuscripts, the fruit of more than twenty-six years of indefatigable labor, were destroyed by the flames. He lamented his loss of the

“Pansophia” the most. To Bohemian literature the loss of his manuscripts of a great Bohemian-Latin dictionary was almost irreparable. He wrote: “This loss I shall cease to lament only when I cease to breathe.”

Goes to Holland.—“Almost naked,” as he said, and destitute of everything, he fled to Silesia, and from there moved onward to Brandenburg, Stettin, and Hamburg, where he lay sick for two months. At last he found an asylum in Amsterdam, in the family of Lawrence de Geer, the son of his former patron, Lewis de Geer, where he could spend his last years free of cares. Here he published his “Light in the Darkness,” and many other religious works. In one of them the nearly seventy-year-old man wrote to the Brethren: “I bid you farewell,—farewell to all of you of my people and of my church, as Jacob did to his sons, whom he had led into Egypt and could not lead away again; and as Moses to his people, who led the people out of Egypt, but could not bring them into the Promised Land; and as Paul took leave of the beloved Ephesians at Miletus, whom he was never to see again. Farewell now, as if you had bedded me in my grave. If the Lord should grant me a few more days, may they serve me to rest and to prepare myself for the eternal journey, and that I might have some recreation before I depart from this life.”

Last Years and Death.—Although Comenius had said he would rest now from all his labors, he wrote several other books, the last and best of which is “The One Thing Needful.” When eighty-one years old, on November 15, 1671, Comenius died. To his last breath he adhered firmly to his faith in God’s mercy. He had

been, as he wrote of himself in "The One Thing Needful," always a man of aspirations, who at last found rest in God, the Fountain of all good (*summum bonum*). "He praised the Lord that He had not given him a country and a home on this earth, but that it was to be to him a place of exile and of pilgrimage, so that he could exclaim as to David: 'I am both thy pilgrim and thy sojourner.' " *

Comenius's Memorials.—On the day of the two-hundredth anniversary of Comenius's death, in 1871, a central library was established at Leipzig, under the name "Comenius Foundation." At Prerau a monument was erected in 1874.

* Psalm xxxix. 14: "I am a stranger with Thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were."

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